



southern leopard frog

Rana utricularius

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Amphibia
Order:	Anura
Family:	Ranidae

Features

The southern leopard frog ranges from two to 3 1/2 inches long. The body is light tan, gray-green, or light brown. The spots on the back are smaller than the diameter of the eye. There is a light spot in the center of the tympanum (eardrum). There is no dark spot on the snout. The male's vocal sacs are visible even when it is not calling. The dorsolateral folds (two parallel folds of skin that run down the back) are light in color and extend to the groin area.

Natural History

The southern leopard frog lives in streams, ponds, and lakes. In summer it often is found far away from water. It eats arthropods (spiders, insects, mites, etc.), mollusks (snails, slugs, etc.), and annelids (earthworms, leeches). This frog is a wary, alert, excellent jumper. It may scream when grabbed by a predator. Breeding occurs from March through May in ponds, lakes, sloughs, or flooded fields. The call of the male is a short, chuckling trill. The female deposits 3,000 to 5,000 eggs in three- to six-inch spheres in

water. Hatching occurs in one to two weeks. Transformation to the adult occurs June through July. It is found in southeast Iowa along the Mississippi River as far north as Muscatine.

Habitats

Mississippi River; interior rivers and streams; constructed lakes, ponds and reservoirs

Iowa Status

uncommon; native

Iowa Range

southeast corner of Iowa

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.